

7 February 1983

Daily Summary of Positions on INF--Classified Developments

Danish Parliament to Question Government on INF

At the request of the Social Democrats, the Danish parliament will hold an "interpellation" debate tomorrow to question the Conservative-led coalition government on INF. The SDP reportedly also may table a resolution suggesting that the US consider proposals other than the zero option and that a nuclear-weapons-free zone should be established in Europe. Moreover, the Social Democrats have outlined their position in a 10-point "peace plan." Written by SDP member and former Foreign Minister Olesen, the plan calls for a freeze on all nuclear weapons, a postponement of INF deployments while negotiations are in progress, the inclusion of French and British nuclear forces in any disarmament agreement, and negotiations for nuclear-free zones in the Balkans and in Northern and Central Europe. While not officially SDP policy, party leaders are publicly supporting the plan. Government spokesmen have assailed the Olesen initiative as irresponsible and divisive. According to our Embassy in Copenhagen, however, neither the government nor the SDP wants to precipitate a major confrontation on this issue that could force a general election, in part because it might amount to a referendum on nuclear weapons. Both parties reportedly have been in communication to ensure that the debate in parliament does not get out of hand.

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Comment: The SDP almost certainly is seeking to capitalize on popular doubts regarding INF modernization. The parliament voted last year to freeze Danish contributions to INF infrastructure funding through this spring, and members are likely, during the debate, to speak in favor of a delay in deployment. Any resolution passed by the parliament is not binding, however, and the debate is likely to do little more than embarrass the coalition government.

Moscow Turns Media Guns on Bonn

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Embassy Moscow reports that it has observed a sharp, negative shift in Soviet press treatment of the Kohl government in the wake of the Vice President's trip to West Germany. According to the Embassy, this new tactic contrasts with the previous lack of Soviet media rhetoric on the West German election campaign. The Embassy interprets this as a move by Moscow to pressure Bonn to modify its position on INF and to raise questions in West Germany about Kohl's ability to "handle Moscow." It also notes that the Soviets continue to avoid championing Vogel and the SPD, and it speculates that Moscow does not want to jeopardize a possible SPD victory while at the same time wanting to ensure good relations with the Kohl government if the CDU/CSU triumphs on 6 March.

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